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AND

"THE PINK OF POLITENESS."

Written Respectively by John Thomas Haines and Charles Selby.



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MAIDENS BEWARE!

A BURLETTA, IN ONE ACT.

BY JOHN THOMAS HAINES.

First Produced at the Victoria Theatre, January, 1837.



Dramatis Personæ.

See page 8.

MR. HENRY HAMILTON	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	Mr. Palmer.
GILES GREENS	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	Mr. Marshall.
VICTOR	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	Mr. Suter.
ROSALIE BOUQUET (Assuming the characters of Achille de Entrechats, Maitre de Dance, and Sergeant of the Garde Nationale)	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	Mrs. Fitzwilliam.
CONSTANCE	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	Miss Richardson.

TIME IN REPRESENTATION.—Fifty Minutes.

No. 772. Dicks' Standard Plays.

COSTUME.

GILES.—Dark-coloured French smock frock with red binding, short blue striped trousers striped stockings, red waistcoat, red night-cap, coloured neckerchief, shoes, and buckles.

VICTOR.—Blue French jacket, flowered waistcoat, blue breeches, striped stockings, small drab hat.

HENRY.—Handsome morning gown, slippers, and white trousers.

ROSALIE.—1st dress: Light-blue gown, scarlet French apron. 2nd dress: Light plum-coloured gown, black apron, bandage over eyes. 3rd dress: Sergeant of the National Guard's dress, white cross-belt, and bayonet.

CONSTANCE.—Pink French frock, black apron.

STAGE DIRECTIONS.

EXITS AND ENTRANCES.—R. means *Right*; L. *Left*; D. F. *Door in Flat*; R. D. *Right Door*; L. D. *Left Door*; S. E. *Second Entrance*; U. E. *Upper Entrance*; M. D. *Middle Door*; L. U. E. *Left Upper Entrance*; R. U. E. *Right Upper Entrance*; L. S. E. *Left Second Entrance*; P. S. *Prompt Side*; O. P. *Opposite Prompt*.

RELATIVE POSITIONS.—R. means *Right*; L. *Left*; C. *Centre*; R. C. *Right of Centre*; L. C. *Left of Centre*.

R.

RC.

C.

LC.

L.

* * The Reader is supposed to be on the Stage, facing the Audience.

MAIDENS BEWARE.

SCENE I:—Landscape. Hedge across the stage with stile and stone step, R. C. of it. Cottage 2 E. R. H. Shop adjoining it with upper and lower window. Shutters to open to the lower window. Caps, Bonnets, and different articles of Millinery painted on it. Printed sign on R. H. cottage, "Rosalie Bouquet, Marchand des modes via Paris." A flower stand near R. H. door. The back of the Inn with door and window, 2 E. L. H. Curtains to draw to window. Sign of Charlemagne's Head on L. H. wing. A sloping Garden piece from 2 E. L. H. up centre of stage. Two green chairs by garden piece. Shutters of R. H. house and Curtains to L. H. closed.

Enter GILES, 2 E. R. H., singing, with small hamper slung on shoulder.

Giles. (Putting down basket.)

"Oh, the roast beef of Old England—
The jolly old English roast beef."

Constance! daughter! hollo! (Calls very loud.) This here French air don't agree with my vitals. I'm losing my voice; Constance! daughter! I say, why all the windows are open, and the doors, and not a living soul to attend to the Charley Magney. Hollo! (Suddenly checks himself.) If I bawl in this manner I shall wake my English lodger, and I wouldn't disturb him for the world; it isn't often one gets a traveller that speaks good sensible English to drop in these foreign parts; ha, yes, there's my lady—yes, she's in the little back bar inditing another love billet doo. I'll have her out.

[Exit, 2 E. L. H. door.]

Enter ROSALIE BOUQUET, 2 E. R. H. door, singing a French air.

Ros. Il fait bien beau temps; de weadere is good, my heart is so light; I have dream so well dis night: ha, ha! I must open my shutter—beautiful! there they are, all of a row; de capote, de turban, de chapeau. Ha, brave Mademoiselle Bouquet; ha, ha!

(Opens the shutters, R. H., pointing to the articles painted in the window.)

Enter GILES, L. H., door with open letter, driving CONSTANCE on before him.

Giles. (L. H.) Don't tell me, miss. I know it's to him, though it's wrote in gibberish French! I tell you I won't have none of the set for a son-in-law.

Con. But father, Victor is so good.

Giles. Pooh, pooh! nonsense; nobody's good here, excepting indeed the few English that has happened to have strolled over. Good—it's impossible.

Con. Victor is a kind son:

Giles. He's a Frenchman.

Con. A benevolent master.

Giles. He's a Frenchman.

Con. A tender lover; and a brave—

Giles. Pooh, pooh! he's a Frenchman.

Ros. (Having brought out from R. H. door several flower pots, and small pail with whitewash and brush, which she places on stand, R. H.) Oui, oui, monsieur, he's a Frenchmans; and de English say, French does mean brave now.

Giles. (Crosses to Ros.) Wait a bit, Miss Rosalie, before I talk to you; you see this here letter, it's an undutiful bit of paper, wrote against my orders, so I destroy it. (Tears it) As for ma'am there, she may whimper and whine as much as she likes, she sha'n't have this Victor Roquet as he calls himself, so don't you ask me; for though you are a very great favourite of mine, I won't give no consent.

Ros. Pourquoi cela? that is—why you say no, monsieur?

Giles. Why, I have been all the way to St. Omer's this morning, to buy nice articles that I hadn't got in the house just to please my new English lodger that came last night. He's a fine fellow, knows geography; is acquainted with Turnham Green, and Hammersmith.

Con. Yes, yes; but why do you object to Victor Roquet?

Giles. I'm coming to it—well—why, I don't like him, because he's French; I had enough of the French when I married Madame Musquetaire, your mother; besides I'm English, and hate the French.

Ros. Non, non, dat is all over; de Anglaise love to be free; the Frenchmans love to be free; dey shake hands, ha, ha, dey are free friends. Monsieur Jean de Bull, he is generous everybody know; he say, ha! ha! Monsieur Frenchymans you all come and see me; how do you do every bit of you, eh? You sall take some sheeps, vat you call de mama of de lamb, oui de mouton—you sall drink some of de portere, wis de big vito head on de pot—you shall put your littel toe under my table—you sall be at home. Ah, ah! de Frenchyman say, oui, I will be at home—I will eat—I will drink—I will board, vash, and lodge vid you; we are friends; we never fight again—I vill keep on coming every day to you—ha, ha, ha!

(Imitates the action of both.)

Giles. You're a little darling, and I love you, though you were not born at Hammersmith; but I must provide breakfast; as for you, miss, you have been crying till your eyes are not fit to be seen; there, stay in the air till I call; see, he's opening his window—curtains now.

(Curtains to L. H. window are withdrawn.)

Ros. (*Assisting Giles, who takes up basket.*) Shall I help you wis your basket? Ha, Monsieur Giles, your daughter have water her littel eye—I sall water de littel flower, eh?

(*Takes small watering-pot, and waters flowers R. H.*)

Giles. You shall do as you like, yon little rogue—bless you. Ha, you may say what you like; you must have been born in England, and smuggled over here when you was very young.

[*Exit, 2 E. L. H. door.*]

Con. Heigho! Poor Victor! I fear I shall never be yours. Oh, love! why is it that so light a wing as yours is fetter'd by the heavy chain of duty? Heigho!

Ros. (*Still watering flowers.*) Heigho!—combien vous dois. Ha, ha, ha! How much do I owe? Dat monsieur sigh is de grand enemy of de petite damoiselle.

Con. Ha, Rosalie! I wish I had half your flow of spirits—happy girl.

Ros. Happy! Oh, Constance, you not know—

Con. You are always singing or dancing.

Ros. Oui, oui; I am oblige.

Con. (*L. H.*) You never knew what it was to be crossed in love.

Ros. (*Signs.*) Ha! I have know what de cross in love is; I sing and dance to hide my heart beat.

Con. Then you can pity me, poor Rosalie; but perhaps he did not love you in return?

Ros. Oui, he love me too much; I run away because he love me so well.

Con. (*Reproachfully.*) With him, Rosalie?

Ros. Madame, I had un pere—mon brave pere; he vas soldier—he had de vite hairs—I vas love very much, but I would not dishonour mon pere; non, non.

Con. I entreat your pardon for thinking for a moment—

Ros. Ah, mon ami, we are women, and de love make very weak of us. I can forgive.

(*Embraces her.*)

Victor. (*On stile, R. c. of hedge.*) Constance! Constance!

Con. (*L. H.*) Oh, heavens! 'tis Victor. Hush, hush! You must not come in.

Ros. Ha, Monsieur Victor! bon jour; you must come in, she means.

Vic. (*Bowing, and coming down R. H.*) Mademoiselle, I am very much obliged, so is Constance—ain't you, Constance?

Con. Me, indeed!

Ros. (*Imitating.*) Me, indeed! Le voila, there it is, never confess; I shall oblige you more. I sall go water my littel flower again. Ha, ha!

Vic. You are very good, mademoiselle.

Ros. Oui, oui; I know. Constance—(*aside to her*)—he is very nice mans. Ha! Victor—(*aside to him*)—quelle petite bouche, littel mouth, eh? Oh, oh! I sall water my flower.

(*Finishes watering the flowers—then begins to paint a flower-pot white.*)

Vic. (*R. H.*) Constance!

Con. (*L. H.*) Yes, Victor.

Vic. Any hopes?

Con. Not any. Heigho!

Vic. Heigho!

Ros. Ha! dere is dat mounseer sigh again; he blow de leaf of my rose.

Vic. I am sure I love yon.

Con. So do I love you.

Vic. Bless you, Constance!

Con. I have been thinking the gentleman that arrived last night may, perhaps, persuade him; he's my father's countryman.

Vic. Yes, he might do much.

Con. You must ask him.

Vic. La! I ask—

Con. Yes; am I not worth asking for?

Vic. You are worth dying for—but he might frown and refuse.

Con. Oh, no; he is young and good-natured.

Vic. I'll pluck up a spirit and do it. What's his name?

Con. Monsieur Henri Hamilton is— (*Rosalie screams, and drops the flower-pot.*) What can be the matter? Something in the flower-pot has frightened her. Some insect—

Ros. Non, non—it is de man's—

Vic. Man!—a man in the flower-pot!

Ros. Non, de name. Henri Hamilton is de mans vot I run all away from. Ha! is he here?

Con. I understand. Yes, Rosalie, he is here.

Ros. I sall die. No, I will not be dead. (*Takes brush and pail of whitewash from stand, and rubs out the name of "Rosalie Bouquet" from the sign.*) Come, I have whitewash Rosalie Bouquet. Constance, never you mention my name. Your father knows for why—he know my story. I sall tink—send your father to me. Oh, Henri! Henri! you will break my heart!

[*Exit, R. H. D.*]

Con. Send my father! I will do so: and do you, Victor, hide behind yon hedge till he crosses the garden.

Vic. Yes, Constance. But how shall I see the English gentleman?

Con. I'll manage that. Quick, quick! hide yourself!

[*Exit, L. H. D.*]

Vic. Now if this Englishman refuse, I shall break my heart. Where is the use of my father's dying, and leaving me a matter of sixty sheep, cows, carts, fields, horses, and barns, without I have somebody to govern them and me; and I shall never like anybody but Constance. But I must hide behind that hedge. Yes, they are coming! Quick, Victor, quick!

(*Retires, 3 E. L. H.*)

Enter GILES and CONSTANCE, L. H. D.

Giles. Eh, what? Miss Rosalie want me? Any body been blowing her up about them caps and bonnets? What is it? Don't you see that the lodger is getting up, and I'm setting his break-fast?

Con. Yes, yes: but I'll do that if you go to Rosalie. There is something the matter—she bade me to ask you to come.

Giles. Did she, though? That girl's uncommon attached to me. I say, Constance, what think you of a new Mrs. Green?

Con. Pshaw, father!

Giles. Pshaw, father! I'm only just in my prime, and a bit comely yet! But you look to the lodger. I'll just step in and see what Rosalie wants. (*Pulls up his collar conceitedly.*) Mind—you attend to one bell, while I settle the affairs of the other. Ha, ha, ha! not so bad, neither!

[*Exit, R. H. D.*]

Con. (*Beckons on Victor.*) He's gone, and the English gentleman will soon come down, then I'll contrive that you shall slip into the little back parlour to him. Now, speak up, Victor, if you love me.

Vic. If I love you! Constance, you know I do. I love you better than all the cows and sheep that father left me. I love you better than dancing on the green—shooting at the jay—I—

Con. Yes, I know you love me. But do you only tell the traveller so, he'll intercede with my father, for he knows what love is.

Vic. La! how do you know?

Con. Don't you recollect a story father told me about a poor French girl going to England as the attendant of a grand old lady—and how the old lady's son fell in love with her, and how he made her love him.

Vic. Yes; just like you and I.

Con. Well; but then he was rich—she was poor, and he wanted to take advantage of her.

Vic. I never did—did I?

Con. Pshaw!

Vic. Why, do you believe it?

Con. 'Tis true; and Rosalie Bouquet was the poor girl.

Vic. No!

Con. Yes. Father never told me the names, but I discovered it just now. Our lodger is her cruel lover. Don't you recollect how she screamed when I mentioned his name?

Vic. Oh, yes. When she broke the flower-pot.

Con. Step this way on tiptoe into the little parlour, and then when he's at breakfast I'll lead you along the dark passage to his room.

Vic. The dark passage! um!

(Smacks his lips and wipes his mouth.)

Con. Don't be such a fool! Softly—softly!

[Exit with Victor, L. H.]

Enter GILES, followed by ROSALIE, who has been weeping, R. H. D.

Ros. You will do it, Monsieur Giles? You will be de pauvre French girl's friend again?

Giles. Oh, yes; I'll do anything for you. Bless you! Don't cry—you'll spoil your pretty eyes!

Ros. Ah, monsieur! my heart is spoil.

Giles. I had some thoughts of bidding for that article myself; but you wouldn't like a poor gardener, would you? especially when there's so fine a spark as this Mr. Hamilton in the way.

Ros. Ha, ha, ha! you joke me. But, mon chere ami, you will do all vot I ask of you?

Giles. Yes; every particular. You're to be a poor relation of mine—yes, and I'm not to mention your name.

Ros. Non—not at all. I vill punish him, if he have any heart—I vill speak my distress when I leave England. I vill say to him—

SONG.—ROSALIE.

Bon gentilhomme—bon gentilhomme—

Pity une pauvre demoiselle,

Wis petite bagatelle I roam,

Je vais pour chanter une chanson,

And try wis you my ware to sell.

Ah, ah, monsieur—

(Given archly.)

Ah, ah, monsieur—

(Imploringly.)

Quelle petite bouche, a soldier cry,

He try to snatch de kiss—oh, fic!

Quel age ma chere? monsieur inquire,

Me say, Je ne dois pas le dire—

Me must not tell—me must not tell.

Non, non, monsieur—

(Gravely and reproachingly.)

Non, non, monsieur.

(Archly nodding.)

Bon gentilhomme—bon gentilhomme,

Pity une pauvre demoiselle,

Wis organ and wid pipe I roam,

Je vais pour chanter une chanson,

Me play de music vry well.

Ah, ah, monsieur—

(Given with a drawing imitation of the organ in action.)

Ah, ah, monsieur—

(Archly curtsying as if for money.)

Commes ses yeux, sont bien fendus—

How large her eyes!—sure Venus send you.

Oui de meure—r'elle—monsieur inquire,

Me say, jene dois pas le dire;

Me must not tell—me must not tell.

Non, non, monsieur— (Archly and playfully.)

Non, non, monsieur.

Ros. You'll tell him all dat, Monsieur Giles?

Giles. And you intend telling him this? Softly, here he comes.

Ros. Oui—ha! I know de sound of dat foot. He come. Je pansdo—I go. Mind you remember not to forget.

[Exit, R. H. D.]

Giles. Poor girl! I pity her—but where's the use of that if my young spark don't? I remember, when I was living at Hammersmith,—happy times them—I was one of a society to prevent cruelty to animals, but we never thought of putting down them animals as breaks young women's hearts.

(Retires.)

Enter HENRY, in a morning gown.

Hen. Where shall I go for rest? I can't sleep, I can't sit. Walk, walk, for ever. Nothing but motion stays the whirling of my brain!—then this infernal country—I must be off, but not to England. No, never to England without her! Oh, Henry, Henry, what a fool you were to let such a delicious girl slip through your fingers! I'm very hungry—No, I'll never eat any more, never! I wonder they don't come to tell me breakfast is ready! There, again—"Le dejeuner est pret," told through her pretty mouth so gracefully—I always used to eat two rolls and a plate of ham and fowl more after hearing it! Le dejeuner est pret. Oh, melody! though I have travelled France through to seek for her, I could never hear a French tongue call me to breakfast so musically—that's the reason I always put up at the English houses. I hate France, I hate England, I hate myself, I hate everybody!

Giles. (Down, L.) Good morning to you, sir.

Hen. (R.) Ah, landlord, I could not sleep last night.

Giles. No fleas, I hope? No puces, as they call them here?

Hen. I know not what to do with myself; I can neither sit, read, nor write.

Giles. Not read nor write!—well that's a pity!—I learned both at the charity school at Turnham Green.

Hen. Pshaw!

Giles. However, I'll lend you a hand if you indites:

Hen. Is breakfast ready?

Giles. Oh, yes, I laid the cloth and tray—I laid all but the eggs? Constance is laying them. Will you walk?

Hen. No, I am not well, I can't eat

Giles. What's the disorder?

Hen. I've got the fidgets.

Giles. Ah, they're very bad. I used to have 'em of a market morning, for fear the retail dealers should not dub up the stumpy.

Hen. You have not long left England?

Giles. Oh, bless you, a matter of twelve years—though I speaks my mother tongue in all its purity, yet—

Hen. I perceive you do. But what made you leave England?

Giles. Oh, the fortune of war, as they say!

Hen. Oh, you were a soldier—a follower of glory—a cultivator of laurels?

Giles. No, I warn't, I was a cultivator of cabbages and ingons—a follower of greengrocery. I lived at Hammersmith—delightful times them—and used to supply the markets. Did you never hear of Giles Greens, the market gardener?

Hen. I really can't say I ever did.

Giles. That's odd! Why, I'm known as well at Covent Garden as the shape of a cucumber is! I used to go there, but I went once too often.

Hen. How so? Even this fellow's talk amuses me.

(*Aside.*) Giles. Why you see there was a Madame Musquetaire—the French widow of one of the Swiss guard of Louis the Sixteenth,—used to come and buy apples for fritters, and carrots for haricots, and she cast a longing look at me. I was a hearty fellow then—hadn't been living in this French air—and she used to come smiling and bowing to me, and call me her jolly *fil*s—I was jolly then—and look at me with a pair of great black eyes. She used to look so. (*Leers in imitation.*) There was no standing against them looks, was there?

Hen. Ha, ha, ha! Well, how did you get on?

Giles. Oh, we went off—I was seduced—I made the widow Musquetaire Mrs. Greens. We hadn't no sprouts, but one, thank heaven!—my daughter, Constance, as she called her! I wanted her to be called Peggy.

Hen. Was you happy with your French wife?

Giles. Happy! Lord love you! I soon found out that them black eyes which smiled so could look like devil's eyes. And she blowed me up so in French gibberish that I hate the very sound of the language. Well, she led me the life of a dog till I sold my gardens, and come over here and bought this public-house, where I've lived ever since.

Hen. And your wife?

Giles. Oh, she did not follow my example—she never would do as I did, so as I didn't choose to die, she did, and I had the pleasure of putting Mrs. Greens under the green sod!

Hen. I congratulate you. How different my case! I love a French woman to distraction, she, instead of running away with me, has run from me. I have lost her.

Giles. So have I mine; we'll congratulate one another!

Hen. I shall never know peace till I find her; she was my mother's waiting woman—lovely as an angel, virtuous as a dragon. Never shall I forget with what melody she used to call me to breakfast—"Le dejeuner est pret." I think I hear her now! Like softest music.

Enter ROSALIE, with bandage over her eyes, and supporting herself with a cane, 2 E. R. H. D.

Ros. (*Down R., and curtsying.*) Le dejeuner est pret, monsieur?

Hen. Ah, that voice! 'Tis she! No, what

phantasy is this? I have talked of her till I fancy I hear her voice. What did you want, young woman?

Ros. Le dejeuner est pret, monsieur?

Hen. Oh, you come on purpose to ask me to breakfast, thank you. I never heard a voice so like—I must speak to this girl. (*Aside.*) Can not you speak English?

Ros. Oh, oui, monsieur; I can speak English much well.

Hen. Here, Greens, why does she wear that bandage? Is she blind?

Giles. (*L. H.*) Why, not exactly; only she can't see.

Hen. What a pity; who is she?

Giles. Why, she's a relation of mine—that is of Madame Greens', only she has got none of her temper.

Hen. I'll be sworn not. Her melodious voice speaks the harmony of her mind; so, you speak English?

Ros. Oui, I have been in England. (*Sighs.*)

Hen. Why do you sigh at the recollection of England?

Ros. Ah, England! oui, I had some one person there I love; I have lose dem.

Hen. Some relation?

Giles. Yes: a mother's aunt's cousin; so she came away to France with her little bundle under her arm when this young man ill-used her.

Hen. Ill-used her—a man, too? The villain!

Ros. Non—non, not villain; he was prond—but no villain; he say he love me.

Hen. Ha! then he should have married you.

Ros. Ah, monsieur!

Hen. You were not blind then?

Ros. Non, but I was poor.

Hen. He was a mereenary scoundrel! So he refused you?

Ros. He made a proposal dishonourable to me. I spurn him den. He was too proud to make de pauvre French girl his wife, but de pauvre French girl was too proud to be his mistress. I know I should break de heart of mon father, so I paek up mon littel bundle, and without mon quarter's wage I run away to France; I take nosing wis me but mine honour, but I fly proudly to the arms of mon pere.

Hen. You run to your father?

Ros. Oui; I could not disgrace him. He was one soldier of Napoleon.

Hen. And so you fled?

Ros. Oui. On de road I met wis mon father, wounded; he was come from Waterloo. He vas oblige to stay here; his wound it get worse, and he pine all away.

Hen. Through pain, eh?

Ros. Non, it vas not de pain; he heard de news, de Empreur he fly—he abdicate; that vas one pang to de soldier's soul. He hear his child vas disgrace in England; ha! de veteran's heart it die den; dat vas one other pang much worse; but I come to him—I say, mon pere, I am innocent. I come to you to die, to starve, but I bring my honour—de honour of de soldier's daughter—pure, unsullied; he smile den—he press me to his heart. I sit and watch mon pere, and I see his life steal away in his tears—he pray for his child—he bless de grand Napoleon; and he—he expire in my arms! Mon pere! mon pere!

(*Sobs and exits, R. H. door.*)

Hen. (*Takes out his handkerchief, wipes his eyes.*

Giles does the same.) Sweet girl! What a pity 'tis she's blind. Has she been long so?

Giles. Oh, no—very short time; she had such a pair of peepers, but not a bit like Madame Musquetaire's. However, I'll go and see that your coffee doesn't boil over; perhaps you'll come in by-and-by to breakfast?

Hen. (Sitting, c.) Aye, aye; I'm not hungry now.

Giles. Well, but I an't had any myself, and I've been to St. Omer's this morning, so you'll make free and just come in when you like.

[Exit L. H. door.]

Hen. (Rising.) What a strange similarity between the voice of this girl and that of Rosalie. My heart leaped to my mouth when she called me to breakfast—I could have hugged her. I think I shall stay here some days, if it be only to listen to her prattle—perhaps weeks—perhaps months, poor girl! Run away from some rascal in England, and wept her pretty little eyes blind! Perhaps Rosalie is weeping for me. Oh, no, she never loved me as this poor girl has loved. (*VICTOR and CONSTANCE appear at back, 3 E. L. H.*) Curses on all betrayers of innocence! Thank Heaven, I'm not one! No, her running away saved me that! Curses on all who interfere to prevent true lovers being joined, and—

Con. (Down, R. C.) Oh, sir, I'm glad to hear you say that.

Vic. And so am I, Mr. Englishman.

Con. Because now—

Vic. Yes, because now—

Con. We're quite sure—

Vic. Yes, we're quite sure that—

Hen. (Sits.) Sure of what, my friends?

Vic. Eh, sure of what? What are we sure of, Constance?

Con. (Curtseying.) We're quite sure that your honour will help us.

Hen. That I will, my pretty lass, if I can.

Vic. Yes, we were sure of that—were we not, Constance?

Hen. Constance! Oh, then you are the landlord's daughter?

Con. Yes, your honour; and this is Victor Roquet, and he wants to be—to be—

Vic. The landlord's son, my lord Englishman.

Hen. Oh, a love affair, eh?

Vic. Don't blush, Constance—the gentleman guesses quite naturally. I dare say, now, love be the same in England as it is here?

Hen. Pretty much the same all the world over. But why does your father object, my pretty maid?

Con. Because Victor's a Frenchman.

Vic. And I can't help that, can I? I didn't choose where I should be born!

Hen. But you speak excellent English?

Vic. Oh, yes; Constance and I have been together ever since we were four years old. She taught me, and I learn anything she teaches very quick.

Hen. Love is an apt scholar: the sigh, the glance, to him are volumes. He scans at once the heart, and in each slow pulsation reads warm passion's history. But tell me, my pretty one, how is it, that since your father so dislikes everything French, he takes such an interest in the young girl who was here just now?

Con. Here just now?

Vic. He means Mademoiselle Rosalie Bouquet.

Hen. (Starting up—Victor retreats.) Rosalie

Bouquet! What say you? Where—when? Rosalie here! can it be? Yes, the voice—ha! (*Seizes Victor.*) Tell me, sir, or I'll tear you piece-meal—is this Rosalie? do not jest with me!

(*Shaking him.*)

Vic. Oh, help! murder!

Con. (Sobbing.) Oh, don't kill him! What shall I do for a husband?

Hen. Tell me, or—

Rosalie. (At door, R. H.) Le dejeuner est pret, monsieur.

Hen. That voice!

Vic. It wasn't mine!

Con. It wasn't mine!

Hen. Silence! Was it hers? Was it Rosalie's?

Con. and Vic. Yes, yes!

Hen. (Runs to L. H. D. and knocks.) Rosalie! beloved Rosalie! 'tis I—'tis Henry Hamilton—your own Henry! Open the door, for mercy's sake!

[Exit into house, L. H.]

Vic. He's mad!

Con. Let's go into the village, till he is cooler.

Vic. He has shaken my life out.

Henry. (Within house, R. H.) Rosalie, Rosalie! will you not listen?

Con. He seems cooler now!

Vic. We'll just bid him good bye. [*As Victor and Constance approach door, L. H., Henry rushes out.*] Monsieur!

Hen. Damnation!

Con. and Vic. Oh, he's mad again!

[They run off, 3 E. L. H.]

Hen. Cruel Rosalie! false Rosalie! will you not hear me? farewell then; I will forget you; I—I—this is obstinacy, she must have known me; yet stay, how? She is blind—Rosalie is blind, and I no doubt have caused this misfortune; yes, now I recollect she fled from one who would have made her dishonour her father. Yes, fool that I was not to recognise the story of my own villainy! I ought to be ashamed to face her; yet, no, I will offer her my hand, blind as she is, I will make her my wife, a poor recompense for the misery I have caused her. I'll inquire at this house, perhaps I may learn something about her there. (*Knocks at door, R. H.*) Pray can you tell me if a girl of the name of Rosalie—

Enter ROSALIE, R. H. D., singing, disguised as Achille d'Entrachete, a Sergeant of the National Guard, with a cigar.

Ros. Aha, monsieur! Bonjour! you just come to Monsieur Verde Greens; for what you knock at my door?

Hen. I beg your pardon, but by your cap, you are of the National Guard?

Ros. Dere is mon earde; Achille d'Entrachete, Sergeant of Le Garde Nationale, and maitre de danse to de first famille. I defend my eountry with my arms, and instruct my eountry wid my legs. Ha, ha!

Hen. An useful member of society. Do you reside in this village?

Ros. Oui; I take up my reside here. (*Pointing to door, 2 E. R. H.*) Unse de cigar, him is go out.

Hen. (Aside.) Ah; at the same house with Rosalie; I may learn something by humouring this youth. By your arm, you hold some rank among the citizen soldiers?

Ros. (R. H.) Oui, I am sergeant; dey make me so, because I vas maitre de danse, and could march.

I vas to teach de rest; so I eall attendez on de parade, but I forget de soldier, and tink of de danse. Ha! I ery "march, messieurs—de tete droit—de head straight up—tres bien," very well, dey march upright—straight as de poker. (*Crosses to L. H.*)

Hen. That was all well.

Ros. Oui, I cry, "Tournez vos pieds en deshors—turn out all your little toes, tres bien." Well dey do so, I vas good soldier so far; but den I cry, "Deux cavaliers et deux dames en avant; montinet et a vos places; cast off de two couple; down de middle, and up again; ha, ha! dey vas bother den—ha, ha, ha!"

Hen. A terrible mistake indeed.

Ros. Oh, horrible! oui, but de worst was, when de all in a row, instead of saying "mark time," (*Imitates.*) I say, "balancez," and the whole regiment do so.

(*Imitates the action of the balancez—laughs.*)

Hen. (*Laughing.*) Awkward indeed!

Ros. Awkward, oui sare, but I cure dem of de awkward; dere is nothing like de danse, it give de soldier de polish.

Hen. What, polishes their arms?

Ros. Non, sare, dere legs; you shall hear.

SONG.—ROSALIE.

Monsieur Cupid, von sly cavalier,
Take up his reside down on earth von year.

And how he teaze de damoiselle,

He study hard, he study well;

He try de musie, oui, dat is so very pretty,

He try de sonnet, oui, dat is so vare witty.

He sing by moonlight—e'est une blonde—

De tear he weep, dey make von ponde.

In vieh he vow to drown,

If she not cease to frown,

But all in vain,

To give dem pain,

He sigh, he fret, he flout, ah!

He swear, he stamp about, ah!

'Till he confess,

It must be dress,

And he make haste,

To laee his vaist.

De coat vas made, de dress was try,

De damsel laughs ven he go by—

Dey laugh ven he go by;

For vat I cannot tell, say he—

Until by chance mon card he see.

Ah, maitre de danse, he ery—de danse he ery!

Me take mon kit—(*Takes out kit from pocket.*)—

me teach de chasseez.

Him learn so quick he me embrassez.

And now he teaze de damoiselle

He strut de dandy beau so well,

Ah, ah! sly Cupid ery to me,

'Tis not de head dey love, me see.

De vay to make the maiden feel,

Is to dance at dem vis your heel.

He shoot my arrow wiz my eye,

But point dem viz my toe he ery,

He never miss dem, no, no, no!

He point his arrow wiz his toe.

Hen. Excellent! and you in your devotion to your art prefer it to music or painting.

Ros. Oui, de poetry vill not give de grace—I have teach mon men to keep de time.

Hen. Oh, you get on better now.

Ros. Ah, oui! my littel wife teach me de exercise.

Hen. Your wife! you are married, then?

Ros. Oui, married all over.

Hen. Pray, sir, do you know one Rosalie Bouquet?

Ros. Sare! vat you say?

Hen. Do you know one Rosalie Bouquet?

Ros. (*Folds her arms and marches up to Henry.*) Sare!

Hen. This is very strange! Do you know Rosalie Bouquet?

Ros. (*Turning sharply.*) Taizes vous, prenez garde! Whoo!

[*Exits hastily, R. H. door.*]

Hen. (*Imitates.*) What the devil does this mean? Prenez garde—whoo! The people are mad here. I'm determined I'll have an answer—I'll see Rosalie—I'll—

(*Going towards R. H. D.*)

Rosalie. (*Within, R. H.*) Oui sont, mes pistolets.

Hen. What does he want with his pistols?

Enter ROSALIE, with two small loaded pistols and snuff box.

Ros. Etes vous seul—are you wid nobody?

Hen. I am alone. What is your pleasure?

Ros. Quest ce que cela vous fait. What is dat to you? I have my own affair—you have insult my wife more than once, two times—in England—here; voulez vous que je vous essais cetni; sall I try dis on your face? (*Pointing to pistol.*) I sall have satisfaction.

Hen. I never saw your wife.

Ros. Je ne scais pas, I not know. You drive her from England—you knock at her door here. My wife is dat Rosalie Bouquet you make de inquire about.

Hen. Rosalie married! Merciful heaven!

Ros. Oui; to Achille Antrechate, de soldier maitre de danse. De honore of de National Guard is hurt. I sall shoot you etes vous pret? Are you ready?

Hen. If Rosalie is married, I am indeed ready.

Ros. I am in de grand passion. De quel tabac, prenez vous. What snuff do you pinch? Take von pinch before I kill you.

Hen. Provoke me not by your insufferable insolence!

Ros. (*Offering pistols.*) Etes vous pret chois-seszez?

Hen. Since Rosalie is lost to me, the sooner I am dead the better. (*Takes pistol.*) Now, sir!

Ros. Attendez stay, que me donnerez vous pour souvenir; have you made vat you leave?

Hen. A wretched heart!—'tis my only legacy.

Ros. Ah, you have two leg, I see. Non—non; 'tis your monies.

Hen. Fool! I am not to be trifled with—my passion is rising.

Ros. Attendez, one more word—have you said your prayers?

Hen. Come, sir, take your ground—one, two, three! (*He walks three paces, L. H., Rosalie three paces, R. H., repeating after him, "Von, two, trey!"*) Fire! (*They fire.*)

Ros. Vous etes mort; are you dead?

Hen. Pshaw, sir; This is boy's play.

Ros. Oh, dere it is! dese foolish Anglaise dey never know ven dey are beat. (*Examines Henry's coat.*) Vere is your shoot?

Hen. Rascal! you are deceiving me. Where is Rosalie? I will see her myself.

Ros. (*Interposing.*) De tout, monsieur; with all my heart when I choose, but you sall not go to

my wife till I run you through the body with dis. (*Draws bayonet—chasing him.*) Aha! you you coward!

Hen. You see I have no weapon, but unarmed as I am— (*Rushes and wrests bayonet from her.*) Villain! I will force you to let me see her! Show the way.

(*Drives her round stage, L. H., encounters GILES, who enters at the moment, L. D.—seizes chair and retreats from him to L. H. Rosalie runs off, R. H., crying, "Après vous, miserecordie! Oh, murder! Help! I sall be kill!"*)

Hen. (*To Giles.*) Now, villain! why did you not tell me of this?

Giles. Tell you of what? Keep that thingembob away, or you'll stiek me.

Hen. I mean to do. Why did you not tell me Rosalie was married?

Giles. Rosalie! why, because I never heard of it myself.

Hen. That's false! you know it is—you are only playing on me to madness! Rosalie Bouquet is married—is here—is bliud! You knew all this, and yet have kept me in suspense.

Giles. Will you listen to reason? I knew no more than a pickled cauliflower that Rosalie was the lady you sought after. How was I to know it?

Hen. True, true! I never told you.

Giles. And what's more, if she is married, it must have been within this half hour.

Hen. What say you?

Giles. Do you love this girl?

Hen. To madness!

Giles. Would you marry her?

Hen. She is married.

Giles. Bah! marry her though she is blind.

Hen. Yes, I'll be her guide.

Giles. Her little dog, her walking stick; consider well.

Hen. I have considered I have searched France through for her; were she not already married, at her feet I would this instant offer my hand and fortune.

Giles. You would? then she is not married. I will fetch her.

Hen. Not married!

Enter ROSALIE in her own dress.

Ros. Non, monsieur, not married; nor yet blind! Rosalie Bouquet is still de bouquet, and she has still her two eyes.

Hen. (*Kneeling.*) Beautiful ones! if I might wear this bouquet in my bosom, dare I hope for forgiveness?

Ros. Taizes vous, we shall see, here is my hand; but il ma egratgne, he has scratched de maitre de dance; avez vous un petit morceau de taffetas d'Angleterre. Have you a bit of de stiek plaster, Henry?

Hen. Enchanting girl! it shall be the study of my life to heal all the wounds I have inflicted.

(*VICTOR and CONSTANCE having entered 3 E. L. H., come down R. H.*)

Giles. (*Seeing them.*) What do you do here with my daughter?

Vic. Nothing yet, we're just married.

Giles. Married!

Con. Yes, we could not help it.

Hen. You must forgive them, Giles; Rosalie shall plead for them.

Ros. (*Crosses to Giles.*) Come, Monsieur Giles, you must forgive them.

Giles. Well, if they're married, I suppose I must, I can't help myself.

Hen. Life is but a table for Cupid's cards, and love the game he chooses.

Ros. Oui, but in de game of love, all Cupid's cards are not de trump: den let de littel maids be satisfy, if like me dey secure de honore. I sall advise dem a little bit. (*Comes forward.*)

Pauvre pretty maidens, of Cupid pray beware!
He come in every shape, oni, ride on every breath of air,

He's busy in de boxes now, he's bnsy in de pit,
So panvre pretty maids beware, he's near you where you sit;

From de box he hand you to your coach,

He wrap your cloak snug round you;

He'd lend his arm—his opera glass

Ha! dat de way he wound you.

In de pit he treat you to a cab,

He pay to see de play;

And all de while de littel rogne

He steal your heart away,

And now I come up to de gods,

Even dere his form he struts;

He treat you vis a glass of somesing,

He buy you bag of nuts.

I sec de littel villain now,

He's very busy there;

So shut your eyes, and stop your ears,

Pray pretty maids beware!

(*Pointing.*)

CURTAIN.

Disposition of the Characters at the fall of the Curtain.

VICTOR.
E.

CONSTANCE.

ROSALIE.

HENRY.

GILES.

THE PINK OF POLITENESS.

A BURLETTA, IN ONE ACT.

BY CHARLES SELBY.

First Produced at the Olympic Theatre, February 8th, 1840.



Dramatis Personæ.

See page 17.

DUKE DE COYLLIN	} ...	(Gentlemen of the Court of Louis XIV.)...	}	Mr. Jones.
DUKE DE LAUZUN				Mr. Baker.
DUKE D'HUMIERES				Mr. Halford.
MONSIEUR DE ST. LUC				Mr. Harry.
DE BEAUFORT				Mr. Beckett.
PLUMETTI		(Valet to Louis XIV.)		Mr. Pitt.
CASSEROLE		(A Steward)		Mr. Turnour.
MADAME DE NOGENT	} ...	(Ladies of the Court)	}	Miss Connor.
MADAME DE CHAMARANTE				Miss Treble.
MADAME DE KERGOET				Mrs. Anderson.

SCENE.—A Castle in Holland, during the Dutch War

TIME OF REPRESENTATION.—Forty-five Minutes.

COSTUME.

DUKE DE COYLLIN.—Light blue velvet tunic-coat, richly laced with gold, salmon coloured satin full breeches, with bunches of ribbon at the knees, broad embroidered crimson sword-belt, crimson silk stockings with gold clocks, white shoes with crimson bows, very long brown or red ringlet wig, white low crown broad-brimmed Spanish hat, trimmed round with white feathers, white neckcloth with long ends.

DE LAUZUN, D'HUMIERES, ST. LUC, and DE BEAUFORT.—Same fashion as De Coyllin, in different colours, black high boots and spurs, black hats.

PLUMETTI.—White jacket and breeches, trimmed with scarlet, long light wig.

CASSEROLE.—Old man's gray doublet and trunks, white ringlet wig.

MADAME DE KERGOET.—Crimson robe gown, white satin petticoat, embroidered with gold, hair in ringlets, white lace veil at back of head, embroidered with gold.

MADAME DE NOGENT and MADAME DE CHAMARANTE.—Same fashion, in different colours.

STAGE DIRECTIONS.

EXITS AND ENTRANCES.—R. means *Right*; L. *Left*; D. F. *Door in Flat*; R. D. *Right Door*; L. D. *Left Door*; S. E. *Second Entrance*; U. E. *Upper Entrance*; M. D. *Middle Door*; L. U. E. *Left Upper Entrance*; R. U. E. *Right Upper Entrance*; L. S. E. *Left Second Entrance*; P. S. *Prompt Side*; O. P. *Opposite Prompt*.

RELATIVE POSITIONS.—R. means *Right*; L. *Left*; C. *Centre*; R. C. *Right of Centre*; L. C. *Left of Centre*.

R.	RC.	C.	LC.	L.
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* * The Reader is supposed to be on the Stage, facing the Audience.

THE PINK OF POLITENESS.

SCENE.—A dilapidated Apartment in an old Castle. Entrance, C. L. H. in F. A Gothic Window with Lattice and Iron Bars. A Door leading to an inner Chamber, 2 E. R. H.

Enter CASSEROLE, D. F. L. H. C.

Cas. (*Speaking as he enters.*) There—there, that will do—take away your brushes and brooms, and look after the kitchen! Dear me—dear me, only to think of our old castle receiving a visit from a king—a real king! (*Pompously.*) His most sacred Majesty Louis the Fourteenth, King of France and Navarre—

Plumetti. (*Without.*) Hollo! hollo! Casserole, you old fool, where are you?

Cas. There's his principal valet, Monsieur Plumetti, the inspector of my preparations, one of the most gentlemanly men I ever—

Plu. (*Without.*) Death and ten thousand devils! Where are you, old scarecrow?

Cas. Dear me, how he swears! I never imagined such a— (*Running to door.*) Here, Monsieur Plumetti, here—

Enter PLUMETTI, C.

Plu. Why the dence don't you keep in the way, you stupid old twaddler? This is the third time I've lost myself in your tumbledown old wilderness of a castle; had I known that Holland was such a cold, damp country, and the castles so excruciatingly uncomfortable, devil take me, if I would not have resigned rather than have irritated my temper—depressed my spirits, and ruined my constitution, by following his Majesty in this wild-goose chase he is pleased to call—war!

Cas. Ah, it must be very harassing. I remember when I was a very young man, I—

Plu. That will do: I know. Is everything prepared for his Majesty's reception?

Cas. Everything as far as the shortness of the notice would permit. The floors have been—

Plu. That will do—I know. I never saw such a rambling old place in my life. How long is it since it was inhabited by anything human, save yourself and the rats?

Cas. Why, let me see. It is now twenty years since my late master, the Baron Von—

Plu. That will do—I know. Infernal prison! Have you prepared apartments for his Majesty's suite?

Cas. Yes; there are sixteen chambers, each containing a bed, a table, four chairs, and—

Plu. That will do—I know. Have you paid attention to the comforts of the ladies?

Cas. (*Astonished.*) Ladies! Dear me—ladies! I

never thought— Does his most sacred Majesty, Louis the Fourteenth, King of France and Navarre, carry all the ladies of his court with him when he goes to war?

Plu. No, only a part. We have but Mademoiselle (*you know who*), and her three ladies: Madame de Nogent, Madame de Chamarante, and Madame de Kergoet.

Cas. Dear me, how unfortunate! Had I known that ladies—dear me, dear me! I'm afraid they'll be very uncomfortable. Is Mademoiselle (*we know who*), as pretty as they say she is?

Plu. Yes, yes, quite—quite; she's worthy of us: exactly our style. Beautiful and elegant! fascinating—my dear Casserole, fascinating!—a divine creature!

Cas. Yes, yes—like Madame De—

Plu. That will do—I know. (*Giving a paper.*) There is a list of all our personal attendants; let their names be written on their respective apartments: I have put them down according to their rank. (*Trumpets sound without.*) His Majesty has arrived. Away, Casserole, to your duty. Look well to our comfort, or your head—you understand: vanish! (*Pushes him out.*) Now my troubles begin. (*Laughter without.—He goes up.*) Ah! the Duke de Lauzun, and the ladies! I must do the honours. This way, gentlemen—this way, ladies, this way!

Enter BEAUFORT, MADAME DE NOGENT, DUKE DE LAUZUN, D'HUMIERES, and MADAME DE CHAMARANTE, and ST. LUC, C.—Plumetti bows, and Exits.

De L. Once more, fair ladies, and gallant gentlemen, let me bid you welcome to the Castle of Brissach.

Mad. N. A very noble and particularly ancient fortress—ha, ha, ha!

Mad. C. Remarkable for the elegance of its decorations, and its extraordinary air of warmth and comfort. Ha, ha, ha!

Mad. N. Delightful retreat on a cold winter's night. I shall die of ennui.

Mad. C. And I of fear. These agreeable old castles are always haunted.

De L. Permit me to be your guardian? I pledge myself to scare away the most formidable goblin that ever dragged a chain, or rejoiced in blue fire!

Mad. C. Fie, fie, Monsieur de Lauzun; you forget your allegiance in another quarter. What is to become of Madame de Kergoet?

D'H. Be under no alarm about that, madame. The Duke has a rival.

Mad. C. Indeed! Yourself?

D'H. Oh, no! 'tis a gentleman well known at court, who is beloved by all the ladies for his extreme good nature and elegant manners, though he is sometimes laughed at by us for carrying his amiability a little too far. In a word, this redoubtable rival is no other than the "Pink of Politeness," Monsieur de Coyllin.

Mad. C. (*Laughing*) Ha, ha, ha, poor Lanzun, your case is hopeless! Monsieur le Due de Coyllin is irresistible!

De L. Satirical tyrant! I'll be revenged by turning the laugh on your protégé. Listen to his last chivalric adventure. (*The ladies and gentlemen advance.*) Three days ago, when we were at Maestricht, one of the Dutch ministers paid our polite friend a visit, who, according to his over refined notions of civility, when the conference was over, insisted on conducting the stranger to his carriage. Now, it happened that the visitor was almost as finished a courtier as the Duke himself; he made a thousand efforts to resist so much unnecessary ceremony, but in vain; De Coyllin would not waive one jot of strict propriety—a struggle of politeness ensued—the two fools fought the battle step by step, compliment by compliment, and bow by bow, till at length the Dutchman, finding he was likely to be vanquished, dashed through the open door, doubled locked it on his Quixotic opponent, and made his escape. Poor De Coyllin, shocked at his own breach of etiquette in suffering so distinguished a personage to quit the house in so unceremonious a manner, opens one of the windows, and, at the risk of his neck, jumps into the street, runs bare-headed after the carriage, bawls to the coachman to stop; and, in the midst of the pouring rain, making three of his graceful bows, requests the minister to receive the assurance of his most profound respect. (*All laugh.*)

Mad. C. Malice—mere malice!

Monsieur de Coyllin. (*Without, L. c.*) This way, my dear madam, the corridor is dark; permit me to have the honour of preceding you.

Mad. C. Here he is, doing the amiable to his lady love.

Enter MONSIEUR DE COYLLIN, L. c, leading MADAME DE KERGOET, with great ceremony, by the tips of her fingers.

De C. Now, fair lady, you are in safety; but before I relinquish this delicate little hand, permit me, as your devoted slave, to press it to my unworthy lips!

(*Kisses her hand with great respect.*)

D'H. You have arrived most apropos, De Coyllin, we were just speaking of you.

De C. (*Crossing to D'Humieres and taking his hand.*) You did me too much honour!

D'H. De Lanzun has been paying you a thousand compliments.

De C. (*Crossing to De Lauzun, who is talking to Madame Kergoet.*) Oh, Monsieur de Lauzun—

(*Shakes his head.*)

De L. (*Ceremoniously returning De Coyllin's bow, and pointing to D'Humieres.*) I was but the echo of my friend!

De C. (*Hastily returning to D'Humieres, and shaking his hand.*) Oh, Monsieur D'Humieres—

D'H. (*Returning the bow, and pointing to De Lauzun.*) Nay, my praise was feeble; he called you the "Pink of Politeness."

De C. Oh!

(*Running to De Lauzun, who has turned his back, and is in earnest conversation with Madame de Kergoet; after several bows and other ineffectual attempts to attract attention.*)

Monsieur de Lauzun, permit me to shake you by the hand, and assure you of my most profound respect!

De L. (*Impatiently*) Oh, sir, everybody knows there is not a man on earth so—(*aside to ladies and gentlemen*)—ridiculously—(*to De Coyllin*)—polite as yourself!

De C. While you live, Monsieur de Lauzun, that is impossible! (*All laugh at De Lauzun—De Coyllin looks from one to the other, astonished, then laughs himself.*) Charming, charming! (*Aside.*) I don't know what it is, but I suppose it's something very droll—ha, ha, ha! (*Suddenly changing the expression of his face.*) But I ought not to laugh after the dreadful news I have just heard.

D'H. What, are the Dutchmen going to give us battle to-night?

De C. Oh, worse than that, a great deal.

Mad. K. For heaven's sake, speak! Don't frighten us.

De C. A dreadful calamity!

Mad. K. Some one dead? Monsieur de Turenne, perhaps?

De C. No, no. The catastrophe I have to speak of, relates to the royal family.

Mad. K. Indeed! Has anything happened to the King?

De C. No; his sacred Majesty, I rejoice to say, is in the best of health; but mademoiselle—oh—

Mad. K. Is she dead?

De C. No; she's at supper, but in such a room. Oh! a bed without curtains, four chairs and a table. Oh, heavens!

De L. Is that all?

De C. Can there be anything more dreadful? Imagine, mademoiselle, no curtains, four chairs, and a table. Agonizing thought!

Mad. K. 'Tis, indeed, terrible! What will become of us? Perhaps we shall have no bed, and must sleep on the four chairs, or the table.

De C. (*Crossing to Mad K.*) That shall never be the case, madam, while I am alive.

De L. By the bye, Coyllin, you, who believe in ghosts, will have an opportunity of indulging your love for the marvellous; there is a report abroad that the spirit of the late governor of this castle comes every night to pay it a visit. (*Bowing to the Ladies.*) And certainly, were I in his ghostship's situation, this is the night above all others I should enjoy my privilege.

Mad. K. Is it possible! Monsieur de Coyllin, do you believe in ghosts?

De C. Do not you?

Mad. K. A little.

De C. (*To Mad N.*) And you, madam?

Mad. N. A great deal!

De C. (*To Mad. K.*) And you, madame?

Mad. K. To a terrific degree! I think they are always flying about.

De C. And you, gentlemen?

De L. and Gentlemen. Oh, of course—of course!

De C. Then I may, without presuming to differ in opinion with any of you, frankly confess, that I do believe the spirits of the departed return to visit those they loved in life. (*Bowing to the Ladies.*) If

I should have the happiness of dying in your company, be assured I should consider it the height of indecorum not to take an early opportunity of paying my respects.

Mad K. (*Aside.*) Heaven forbid! How can you frighten me so, Monsieur de Coyllin? I shall be looking for you every night.

De C. (*Bowing.*) Oh, madam, you do me too much honour!

Enter PLUMETTI, c.

Plu. His Majesty's supper is served: the presence of the ladies is commanded.

[*Exit, c.*]

De L. (*Crossing to Madame de Kergoet, and offering his arm.*) Permit me the honour—

De C. (*Starting forward from the other side at the same moment.*) May I have the—

De L. I beg your pardon! (*Bowing.*)

De C. (*Bowing.*) Forgive me!

De L. I believe that I—(*Bowing to Mad. K.*) Am I right?

Mad. K. Really, gentlemen, I am at a loss to decide, the movement was simultaneous, but—(*Taking De Coyllin's arm.*)—you, De Lauzun, shall lead me down to-morrow.

De C. (*Leading her off with great ceremony, c. d.*) The whole world must envy me!

[*During the foregoing dialogue, Madame de Chamarante, and Madame de Nogent are conducted off by De Beaufort and Gentlemen, who, having seen them to the door, return immediately.*]

D'H. You see, Duke, you have no chance.

De L. Don't be too sure of that; and I'll wager what you please, that in spite of the fascinations of that polite fool, I will win her.

D'H. Done. I'll back the "Pink of Politeness" for two thousand louis!

De L. Done!

Beau. I'll back De Lauzun.

St. L. And I, De Coyllin.

De H. But stay; when is the wager to be decided?

De L. To-morrow! Nay, I am so confident of success, that I would undertake to win her to-night.

De H. Well, time will show! Adieu! You'll lose, Duke—get ready your two thousand louis!

[*Exeunt Beaufort, St. Luc, and D'Humieres, L. H. C.*]

De L. No, no, look after your own. So, my friends defy me—very well; then I'll prove to them that my fame as a man of gallantry is not founded on slight grounds,—the devil's in it, if I can't out-manceuvre such a fool as De Coyllin—my reputation is at stake! She must—she shall be mine!

Madame Kergoet. (*Without.*) Send my woman to me immediately.

De L. Ah! propitious to my wish, she comes.

Enter MADAME DE KERGOET, c.

Mad. K. Monsieur de Lauzun—alone?

De L. Yes, madame; solitude is the only refuge of a rejected lover.

Mad. K. (*Pretending astonishment.*) Is it possible? Can Monsieur the Duke de Lauzun have found a cruel fair one?

De L. Worse, madame—a coquette, whose sole delight is to torture his too susceptible heart!

(*Sighing—Aside.*) That's pretty well for a commencement.

Mad. K. Monsieur de Lauzun's heart—(*Laughing*)—ha, ha, ha! he must have lost all traces of such an unfashionable inconvenience long since.

De L. Ah, madame, I perceive you have fallen into the popular error, which gives me out a general lover. (*Sighing.*) Alas! 'tis quite the contrary. (*Sighing.*) That last sigh must do something.

Mad. K. What is the matter, Duke—have you got a cold?

De L. A cold? (*Aside.*) What an unfeeling mistake! Oh, no, I have a more violent affection. (*Aside.*) The sighs miss fire—I'll try her with a little sentiment, and a few tears. Listen to my sad story. I had placed my happiness on the smile of an angelic being, whose heavenly face and faultless form, realized all my dreams of female loveliness; whose boundless mind and elegant manners, inspired me at once with love and veneration—this being, this angelic being—this too fascinating woman, smiles on my rival, and mocks me in my misery! (*Hiding his face with his handkerchief.*)

Mad. K. Dear me, how very unkind! Can't you find another?

De L. Another? (*Aside.*) She's made of marble! That speech never failed before. Another! Can you ask that question? (*Aside.*) I'll come to the point at once. Have you not perceived?

Mad. K. What?

De L. (*Falling on his knees.*) That you are the cruel fair one—the fatal cause of all my anguish, believe me, dearest—

Mad. K. (*With great dignity.*) Rise, Monsieur de Lauzun! you forget yourself. (*Going, c.*)

De L. (*Rising and detaining her—Aside.*) Another miss fire! Stay, stay—one word; grant me but one small request!

Mad. K. Well?

De L. Let me see you again to-night?

Mad. K. At his majesty's card party—certainly.

De L. No, no; alone but for one minute.

Mad. K. No, monsieur—let me go!

De L. I'll not release you till you promise.

Mad. K. (*Struggling to get away her hand.*) Well, well—I will, I will!

De L. Here, at midnight. I'll wait for you.

Mad. K. (*Struggling.*) Yes, yes—do let me go!

[*Breaks away, and exits, c.*]

De L. Victoria! the day's my own! Look to your two thousand louis, D'Humieres, they'll soon be transferred from your purse to mine!

Enter DE COYLLIN, c., with a candle in his hand, and a cloak over his arm.

De C. What a dreadful calamity is war! (*Placing candle on table, L. H.*) What a— (*Seeing De Lauzun—bows.*) Ah, Monsieur de Lauzun, to think that I should not see you before; a thousand pardons for my unintentional neglect. Permit me to offer you a chair.

(*Runs for a chair, which he dusts with his handkerchief, and presents with great ceremony.*)

De L. No, no, I thank you!

De C. (*Putting his cloak on back of chair.*) You will, I trust, my lord duke, pardon any little indiscretion I may commit, for I am so agitated by an unfortunate accident that has just occurred to me, that I feel myself almost incapable of behaving with propriety.

De L. Make no apologies. What has happened that has so distressed you?

De C. I was assisting at the retirement of his Majesty for the night. I had the honour of holding in one of the royal candlesticks, a perfumed wax taper, by the light of which our most graeious Sovereign removed his royal vestments; accidentally turning my eyes towards the august resting-place, I perceived that it was frightfully elevated, and that the saered monarch would have great difficulty in stepping into it from the unpolished floor. Trembling with alarm, I looked round for an ottoman or low chair, or anything to abbreviate the awful space, when—what tongue or pen can paint my shame or horror?—I let the taper fall! Yes, Monsieur de Lanzun, I let it fall within three inches of our benignant Sovereign's illustrious feet.

(Hides his face with his handkerchief.)

De L. (Laughing.—*Aside.*) Unhappy maniac! Compose yourself, Duke. A trifling accident.

De C. Trifling; 'twas within three inches of high treason.

De L. Pshaw! his Majesty will readily pardon you.

De C. Yes, yes, I know he will—he *did*; but can I ever pardon myself? Oh, what will they say at Versailles? How will it read in history?

De L. Be assured no notice will be taken of it.

De C. What! will there be no diary of his Majesty's life? No notice of mademoiselle sleeping without curtains?

De L. Not a word.

De C. What vile historians! I must write myself; but I beg ten thousand pardons! I am detaining you—after so fatiguing a day you must need repose.

De L. Nay, I fear I am detaining you. Pray retire to your apartment.

De C. I'm there already; this has been allotted to me by the chamberlain.

De L. (*Aside.*) The devil! what will become of my rendezvous with Madame Kergoet? But, pray don't let me drive you away. If you are inclined to sit up I shall be delighted to bear you company.

De C. Thank you—thank you!

De L. (*Aside.*) That would be worse—I'll go. But where are you going to sleep, I don't see any bed?

De C. (*Going to door, R. H.*) This is only the anti-chamber,—(*Opening door*)—my bed is here. (*Looking into room.*) Good heavens! it has curtains, and mademoiselle has none. (*Gravely taking De Lanzun's arm, and advancing to the front.*) War, my lord duke, is an ill-mannered torrent which sweeps away all the elegant refinements of civilized society. I shall reproach myself for those curtains as long as I live!

De L. (*Aside.*) I must find means to eject him from this room—Beaufort shall assist me. Good night, De Coyllin—pleasant dreams! (*Going.*)

De C. (*Bowing.*) I am your most obedient very humble servant—receive the assurance of my most profound respect. Stay, my lord duke, the corridors are dark—permit me to have the honour of lighting you.

De L. No, no, I insist.

De C. Pardon me—I know my duty better. (*As he turns to take a candle, De Lanzun makes his escape, c., and locks the door—De Coyllin bawls through the keyhole.*) Monsieur de Lanzun, you'll

break your noble neck! Ah, the window. (*He runs to the window—opens it, and holds out the candle.*) Can you see, my lord duke? Take care—take care. Receive the assurance of my most profound respect. (*He leaves the window, and advances to the front, and walks about holding the candle in his hand.*) What a dreadful day I have gone through—I am afraid to recapitulate my indiscretions. First, I have let the Duke de Lanzun go away unattended; then, the taper, that fatal taper! (*Looking at candle and shuddering.*) I shall never look at a candle again without feeling uncomfortable. (*Puts candle on table.*) I never so shamefully disgraced myself before. (*Taking a pinch of snuff—starts.*) Ah! another dreadful error. I three times refused to take snuff with Monsieur d'Humieres, and immediately afterwards accepted a pinch from Monsieur St. Luc—D'Humieres heard me sneeze; and generous man, had the magnanimity to say—"God bless you!" If the war last much longer I shall become little better than a savage! Now I'll go to bed, and try in sleep to forget my manifold transgressions. (*Takes off his wig, and hangs it on the back of the chair—a knock is heard at centre door—he hastily puts on the wig, and goes up.*) I'm locked in—have the kindness to turn the key. A thousand pardons! To the right, if you please, count. Oh, perhaps 'tis a duke. (*Bowing several times, and speaking with more respect.*) To the right, my lord duke—to the right, if it please your grace.

The door opens, and MADAME DE KERGOET appears with a candle.

De C. (*Astonished.*) Madame de Kergoet!

Mad. K. (*At the door.*) Your pardon, Monsieur de Coyllin, but you see me under circumstances of great embarrassment; everybody is in bed this hour or more, and I have in vain attempted to find my chamber—I cannot see my name on any door. Would it be too much to ask you to conduct me round the next corridor, where I may be more successful?

De C. (*Taking the candle, and leading her forward.*) You may command me, madame, to the last hour of my life! But I fear your search will be useless, that side of the castle being tenanted only by domestics.

Mad. K. How distressing! The chamberlain must have forgotten me.

De C. Were I he, madame, on discovering my error I should certainly commit suicide.

Mad. K. But what am I to do? I must find some resting-place.

De C. Accept my apartment.

Mad. K. Oh, monsieur, what would the world say?

De C. True, true, I had forgot the world—excuse me. (*Aside.*) What have I said? Another indiscretion—the taper—the snuff. I am continually committing myself. (*Bowing.*) Accept the assurance of my most profound respect! (*Going.*) I'll find out Madame de Chamarrante's room; perhaps she—

Mad. K. (*Looking.*) Have you another apartment here, Monsieur de Coyllin?

De C. (*Turning and bowing.*) Yes, madame. To think that I should have two chambers, while you—Oh, I shall never forgive myself!

Mad. K. Is there a lock to the door?

De C. (*Going to door and turning key.*) An excellent one. You see there is no danger.

Mad. K. Danger! what, are you afraid?

De C. Oh, no! I have no fear; but I thought that you—

Mad. K. I have not accepted—

De C. (*Hastily.*) No, no; but— (*With great energy, mixed with trepidation.*) Grant me an immeasurable favour—defy the malice of the cold unfeeling world—accept both my apartments, and I will go out and take a walk.

Mad. K. At midnight in the midst of a storm? Don't you hear the wind and rain?

De C. Ah, madame, you do not know the extent of my devotion! Exposed to the fiercest storm that ever raged I'd say, this is my happiest night—Madame de Kergoet has deigned to accept my service!

Mad. K. I know not how to thank you!

De C. (*With rapture.*) You consent! Ah, the joy is too much—I think I am flying in the air! I must dance, I can't help it! (*Dances.*)

Mad. K. (*Laughing.*) Monsieur de Coyllin!

De C. (*Stopping suddenly, and bowing.*) Madame, I—receive the assurance of my most profound respect! (*Going, c.*)

Mad. K. Stay, sir; I am almost afraid to remain here alone; if there should be any ghosts—

De C. I pledge my honour that none shall disturb you. Receive the assurance of my most profound respect!

Mad. K. Once more stay, pray. Do you think you could sleep in this ante-chamber?

De C. I could do anything to oblige you.

Mad. K. To know that you were near me would at once remove all fear; but the world would be ill-natured.

De C. It would—it would! I had better go. Receive the assurance of my most profound respect! (*Going.*)

Mad. K. You are too kind, yet—

De C. No, no, madame, I will not compromise your reputation. Receive the assurance of—

Mad. K. You shall remain—I insist!

De C. Then I must submit. (*Aside.*) I'll sleep on the four chairs.

Mad. K. To-morrow we'll tell the simple facts, and I think no one will be cruel enough to slander us.

De C. (*With firmness.*) Should any man dare, he shall answer for it with his life!

Mad. K. (*Going to door, R. H.*) Now I insist on your bringing one of those mattresses here, and taking your rest upon it.

De C. Oh, madame! the bed is already very uncomfortable—I could not think of it.

Mad. K. You must, or I'll— (*Going.*)

De C. I submit again. Permit me to leave you for one minute.

[*Bows with great ceremony, and exits, R. H.*]

Mad. K. Poor De Coyllin, I could not find it in my heart to let him wander about the castle this miserable night; besides, I may need a protector from another less honourable suitor.

Enter DE COYLLIN, dragging a mattress.

Very well, indeed! Now put it down on the floor, and make yourself comfortable.

De C. You overpower me with kindness!

(*Puts down mattress.*)

Mad. K. (*Taking candle.*) Good night. Permit me sincerely to thank you for your gallant hospitality!

De C. The obligation is mine. May I have the

felicity of conducting you as far as the door? (*He leads her to the door with great ceremony, and makes a series of bows even after the door is shut.*) What a splendid woman! She is worthy the adoration of the whole world. Oh, if I had dared to kiss her hand—three or four times I was tempted, but honour forbade. This is not the proper moment; I'll wait till the campaign is over, and then, perhaps—for I love her—yes, I seek in vain to deceive myself! I love her! She is the sole cause of the derangement of my ideas. Ever since her arrival at Court, I have been unconscious of all I have done or said; all the world has perceived my weakness—the King himself has laughed at me. (*Recollecting.*) Ah! the taper. Oh, that will for ever haunt me! Within three inches of his serene feet! (*Striking his forehead, and walking about.*) The possession, the legitimate possession of this divine woman, can alone restore my reason. Now she is away, I am all in a flame! Were she here now, I think I should have courage to pop the question. Yes; I'm sure I could throw myself at her feet, and avow the long-cherished secret of my soul!

Mad. K. (*Within.*) Oh, how unfortunate I am to-night!

De C. (*Starting back in alarm.*) Eh—eh? I—I—I—hope she's not coming! I don't think I could speak to her now, my courage has evaporated! (*Going to the door, and speaking very respectfully in loud tone through the keyhole.*) Madame, I have the honour of presenting my best respects. May I, without giving offence, ask what is the matter?

Mad. K. 'Tis fated that I am to sit up all night!

De C. Can I be of any assistance? Command me.

Mad. K. There is a knot in my veil which I cannot untie.

De C. What a misfortune!

Mad. K. I shall never undo it myself. How tiresome!

De C. (*Looking round with a rapid variety of expression.*) Shall I offer? (*Repeating the changes of expression.*) I will. Madame, forgive my impertinence in proposing a delicate alternative. Will you condescend to accept of my services?

Mad. K. (*Entering.*) You are very kind. (*De Coyllin gives her his hand, and conducts her to the front.*) What will you think of me?

De C. That you are the most unfortunate of women—(*Aside.*)—and I am the most fortunate of men! (*Afraid to approach her.*) May I venture, madame?

Mad. K. Since you will be good enough. Do you see it—there? (*Pointing out the knot.*)

De C. Yes, yes, I perceive perfectly. (*Aside.*) What an enviable situation! I shall remember it to my last hour—a green spot in my life!

(*Trying to untie the knot.*)

Mad. K. Can't you undo it?

De C. One moment. I wish I had been bred a *fille de chambre*. How my hand shakes! (*Crying out, and shaking his finger.*) Oh!

Mad. K. What's the matter?

De C. A pin—a little scratch, nothing more—thorns always dwell with roses. I shall never untie it.

Mad. K. Don't be flurried—I'll wait patiently.

De C. (*With passion.*) You are a— (*Checking*

himself.) Very good. There, 'tis loose. What shoulders! Oh!

(About to kiss her shoulder.)

Mad. K. (Suddenly turning.) I'm eternally obliged to you!

De C. (Recovering himself, and bowing.) Accept the assurance of my most profound respect! (Aside.) The devil was on my lips.

Mad. K. Once more, good night. (Going—stops.) It is understood, of course, Duke, that this last little circumstance is not to be included in our recital to-morrow.

De C. Certainly, on my honour!

Mad. K. Good night! (Stopping De Coyllin, who offers his hand to lead her out.) No, I will not trouble you. Adieu! (Aside.) He is, indeed, "The Pink of Politeness."

[Exit, R. H. D.]

De C. What shoulders! (After reflecting a moment on the past events with a variety of comic expressions of countenance, seems to mistrust himself, and goes to door, and calls through the keyhole.) Lock yourself in, madame. Look well to the bolts! (Going forward, and walking about with his arms crossed.) What shoulders! Oh, if I had not been restrained by a well regulated mind, what an indiscretion I might have committed. I shall never forget them. Another green spot in my life! I must try to get a little rest. (Takes off his wig and hangs it on the chair, a knock at centre door, he hastily snatches up the wig, and puts it on the wrong way.) Who can that be? I hope the chamberlain has not forgotten another lady. (Opens c. d. DE LAUZUN enters.) Ah, Monsieur de Lauzun, come in, I beg! To what fortunate event am I indebted for the honour of this visit.

De L. Thank the Archbishop of Clermont, who has just arrived. (Aside.) That's an innocent lie, for he'll be here in the morning.

De C. The Archbishop of Clermont! One of my old friends. I'll hasten to pay my respects.

(Going—De Lauzun stops him.)

De L. You'll not see him to-night; he has taken possession of my chamber, and has gone to bed.

De C. Indeed! Then where will you sleep?

De L. Wherever you can accommodate me. Knowing you had two rooms, and relying on your well-known politeness, I have billeted myself on you.

De C. Bowing.) You do me infinite honour! (Aside.) The devil take him!

De L. I shall do very well here in the ante-room. (Seeing mattress.) Eh, what is this? Have you a visitor already?

De C. I have. An imperious necessity has compelled me to dispose of my bed.

De L. The devil! (Aside.) I did not bargain for this. A stranger in the next room will derange my meeting with Madame Kergoet.

De C. I have nothing left but this mattress, which I will resign to you with the greatest pleasure.

De L. You are very good. I am sorry to turn you out of your room.

De C. (Hesitating.) You—you mistake me, my lord duke. I only resign the mattress—(Aside)—I cannot abandon the lady.

De L. I understand, we are to be chamber comrades; with all my heart. (Aside.) I must trust to Beaufort to rid me of him.

De C. To your mattress, my lord duke; I'll take the chair.

De L. No, I insist that you have half the mattress.

De C. Pardon me, Duke: 'tis too narrow for two.

De L. Then I'll have the chair.

De C. No, no! (Pointing to mattress.) Pray oblige me.

De L. (Sitting.) No, unless you consent to share it with me, I'll sit here all night.

De C. Oh, my lord duke! Well, since you insist—

De L. (Rising and going to mattress.) That's well. Mind, we share it equally.

De C. As 'tis your grace's wish. (Aside.) 'Tis impossible to be polite with this man!

(Takes off his wig, hangs it on the chair, and puts on his cloak and nightcap, then, drawing a pistol from his pocket, he places it, with the candle, on the chair, within reach of the mattress. De Lauzun, during this time, has taken off his sword, and wrapped himself in his cloak.)

De L. (Standing at side of the mattress.) Now then—

De C. After you, I beg!

De L. Pshaw! no ceremony.

De C. Not till you are comfortably placed.

De L. Well, well, both together. (They both sit on the extreme edge of the mattress. De Lauzun, with a sudden jerk, forces De Coyllin to lie down, who immediately rolls off the mattress into the middle of the stage.) Have you room enough?

De C. Ten times more than I want.

De L. Good night, I hope you'll sleep well. This is a very soft and comfortable mattress.

De C. (Aside.) I wish I could say the same of the floor. Good night, my lord duke. Permit me to assure you of my most profound respect.

(He extinguishes the candle, and composes himself to sleep.)

De L. (After a pause, sitting up.) He sleeps,—in a few minutes it will be midnight, and then for my meeting with the beautiful De Kergoet. Ha, ha, ha! poor De Coyllin, he little thinks that I am going to steal his mistress from him. (Mysterious music in the orchestra.) Ah! De Beaufort is coming to take away this polite fool! I must pretend to sleep.

(Lies down.—The centre door opens, and BEAUFORT enters, dressed as a ghost, bearing a lighted torch; he slowly advances towards De Coyllin, who, awakened by the glare of the torch, starts up.)

De C. (Alarmed.) Who's there? (Takes the pistol from the chair, and levels it at Beaufort. A pause. Beaufort at first recoils, alarmed, then makes a profound bow. De Coyllin, disarmed by his politeness, puts the pistol in his pocket, and returns the bow with great respect.) So polite a spirit can only belong to the late governor of this castle. (Makes a series of bows, which Beaufort returns.) Permit me to assure you of my most profound respect! He's remarkably well bred. (Offering a chair.) Oblige me by taking a seat. (Sees the candle on the chair, and takes it away hastily.) I beg ten thousand pardons! (Aside.) I've asked the deceased governor to sit down on a candle! Oh, pray make yourself at home. (Pointing to

chair. Beaufort, in action, refuses to sit down.) Ah, perhaps he also wishes to share the mattress. (To Beaufort.) We are two already; but we'll endeavour to make you comfortable. (Beaufort shakes his head.) What can I do to serve you? (Beaufort gives him a red parchment, and commands him to read.) With all my heart! Will you have the goodness to give me a light? (Beaufort holds the torch.) A little higher—thank you. (Bowing.) That will do. (Reading.) "The place on which reposes the body of the Baron Von—Von—(Turning parchment, and holding it closer to his eyes.) Von"—a little more that way with the light, if you please—thank you! "Baron Von Helgrom." (Beaufort bows assent.) Thank you. Your hand is rather cramped. "Baron Von Helgrom, late governor of this castle." I thought so. (Bowing.) Permit me, Baron, to assure you of my most profound respect! "The place on which reposes the body of the Baron Von Helgrom, late governor of this castle, has been turned into a stable. Your horse, Monsieur de Coyllin, is now treading on my ashes." My horse! What a dreadful indiscretion. I understand—you wish me to put an end to this profanation. (Beaufort nods assent, then points off centre, and requests De Coyllin to follow.) I am at your service, my dear Baron Von—Von—(Looking at parchment.) I beg your pardon—Helgrom! (To Beaufort.) Have the kindness to go first, and show me the way. (Beaufort commands him to go first.) No, no, after you, Baron—I insist! (Beaufort points for him to go off with determined action.) Then I submit! (Going.) He is the beau ideal of a finished gentleman!

[Exit, c.]

Beau. (Uncovering his face.) How did I do it?

De C. Famously! Keep him away as long as you can.

Beau. I will!

De C. (Calling, without.) Baron Von Helgrom, the corridor is dark, may I trespass on your politeness for a light?

[Beaufort covers his face, and exits hastily, c.]

De L. (Rising — adjusting his dress — folding mattress, and throwing it off, L. H.) So far so well. (Laughing.) Ha, ha, ha! Poor De Coyllin, his politeness is beyond all praise—ha, ha, ha! (Imitating.) May I request a light—ha, ha, ha! Now, let me make the best use of my time—the beautiful De Kergoet will soon be here; but stay, first let me secure the gentleman in the next room. (Turns key.) He's safe!

Mad. K. (Within.) Who's there? What is the matter, Monsieur de Coyllin?

De L. (Astonished.) A woman! So, so, De Coyllin—the sly fox!

Mad. K. (Within.) What's the matter? Why have you locked the door?

De L. (Recognising the voice.) Ah! 'tis Madame de Kergoet! (Seriously.) Is it possible that this polite fool—Oh, no. (Laughing.) Ha, ha, ha! I understand—a ruse, a charming stratagem to be near the place of rendezvous, and I have locked her in. (Unlocks door.)

Mad. K. Good heavens! What is the matter?—answer me, Monsieur de Coyllin. I am dying with alarm!

De L. (Speaking through key-hole.) Fear nothing, madam—you may open the door.

MADAME DE KERGOET enters, with her toilet a little in disorder.

Mad. K. (Speaking as she enters.) Oh, Monsieur de Coyllin, why did you disturb me?

De L. 'Tis not De Coyllin—'tis I!

Mad. K. (Alarmed.) The Duke de Lauzun!

De L. Yes, madame, punctual to my time. I hope I have not kept you waiting?

Mad. K. (Astonished.) "Kept you waiting!" Where is Monsieur de Coyllin?

De L. As near as I can guess, madame, he is at this moment inspecting the stables under the guidance of my friend De Beaufort, who has assumed, at my particular request, the appearance of a departed spirit. Do not fear interruption—De Coyllin will not return till the morning.

Mad. K. What do you mean, Duke—I am quite at a loss to understand you?

De L. De Coyllin's presence would have embarrassed us. I have used a little stratagem to get him away. (Tenderly.) Now we are alone—

Mad. K. (With dignity.) My lord duke!—

De L. (Advancing.) A thousand thanks for keeping your appointment.

Mad. K. My appointment! Are you in your senses?

De L. Did you not promise to meet me here at midnight?

Mad. K. Oh, Monsieur de Lauzun, I thought you knew our sex better; we are sometimes obliged to resort to subterfuge to extricate ourselves from danger.

De L. Then you did not come here to meet me?

Mad. K. Certainly not!

De L. I understand—De Coyllin is the successful lover. I compliment you, madam, upon your excellent taste. (Laughing.) Ha, ha, ha! What a delightful little anecdote this will be for the court—ha, ha

Mad. K. (Alarmed and angry.) Surely, my lord, you would not?

De L. I would, indeed, madam. Ha, ha, ha!

Mad. K. And you call yourself noble, and a man of honour. For shame—for shame! I will appeal to the King.

De L. His Majesty would enjoy the joke more than any of us—ha, ha, ha! De Coyllin a favoured lover—ha, ha!

Mad. K. (With anger.) Monsieur de Coyllin is a gentleman, sir; and if you should be base and cowardly enough to slander an innocent woman, his sword will do her justice!

De L. (Laughing in derision.) Ha, ha, ha! De Coyllin a doughty champion—ha, ha, ha!

Mad. K. Have a care, my lord duke. Monsieur de Coyllin may sometimes expose himself to raillery by an excess of a quality unknown to some gentlemen at court, but he is a man of heart, sir, who has proved his courage on many occasions; and I am sure he would willingly risk his life to save me from insult and dishonour!

De L. Whew! there's a touch of the heroic.

Mad. L. Begone, sir! and as you value your own good name, let me conjure you to respect mine.

De L. I promise, but—

Enter MADAME DE NOGENT, MADAME DE CHAMARANTE, DE HUMIERES, and ST. LUC, c.)

Unfortunately here are our friends, what shall we say to them?

Mad. K. (Aside.) Ah, I am lost!

De H. (*Astonished.*) Madame de Kergoet! strange—

Mad. K. Very! (*Laughing aside.*)

Mad. C. Particularly! (*Laughing aside.*)

St. Luc. Remarkably! (*Laughing aside.*)

De L. (*Aside to Mad. K.*) I'll bring you off. You are in error, friends, you are in error; my presence here is quite accidental. Monsieur de Coyllin—

Mad. K. (*With force. Aside.*) Duke, remember—

De L. (*Aside.*) Nay, I'll be cautious; but appearances are distressingly against you.

Mad. K. (*Aside.*) Heartless, cruel man

Enter DE COYLLIN—he starts at seeing Madame and the Ladies and Gentlemen.

De C. Ah, she's lost! I'll blow my brains out!

Mad. K. (*Seeing De C.*) There is but one way.

(*Taking a sudden resolution, and speaking with great firmness.*)

Ladies and gentlemen, you are welcome; and as the master of this apartment is not here to do the honours, receive the respects of the Duchess de Coyllin, his wife! (*General astonishment.*)

De C. (*Starting forward astonished. Aside.*) My wife!

All. The Duchess de Coyllin!

Mad. K. (*Aside to De C.*) You will not contradict me?

De C. (*With energy.*) I'd rather die than be guilty of such a breach of politeness! You are my wife. (*Laughing.*) Ha, ha, ha! to think that

she should pop the question. Yes, friends, since the Duchess has avowed our marriage the mystery is over.

(*Taking the hand of Madame de Kergoet, and presenting her.*)

Receive the assurance of our most profound respect. (*Aside to Mad. K.*) Are you in earnest, or is it only a jest.

Mad K. (*Aside.*) In earnest, heart and hand!

De C. Oh! (*Beginning to dance, and suddenly stopping.*) My joy will betray me. Oh! (*Dancing.*) I can't help it, I must dance. (*Suddenly becoming serious, and presenting Madame again.*) Receive the assurance of our most profound respect.

De H. De Lauzun, I'll trouble you for two thousand louis!

De L. Pshaw! I'll have revenge!

Enter DE BEAUFORT.

De B. Monsieur de Coyllin, the King requires your service.

De C. I'll hasten to him—'twill be a good opportunity to announce my marriage. Permit me, madam.

(*Gives his hand to Madame de Kergoet, and is about to lead her off—stops.*)

Stay, I was about to commit another indiscretion. (*Advancing, and speaking to audience.*) Accept the assurance of my most profound respect! I throw myself on your politeness. I'm pleased with you—return the compliment. I am not The Pink of Politeness—you have far excelled me!

CURTAIN.

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